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Promoting youth participation in social and economic development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 50/81 of 14 December 1995, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,[1]

Recalling also its resolution 60/2 of 6 October 2005, in which it took note of the three clusters presented in the "World Youth Report 2005",[2] namely youth in the global economy, youth in civil society, and youth and their well-being, and requested the Secretary-General to provide to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session, a comprehensive report on the implementation of the World Programme of Action, including the definition of goals and targets, in one of the three clusters of the World Programme of Action,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/27 of 26 July 2007, by which the Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of

[1] Resolution 50/81, annex.
[2] A/60/61-E/2005/7.

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the Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,

Recalling Commission for Social Development resolution 45/2,[3] in which the Commission requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with organizations, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to identify goals and targets regarding the cluster "Youth and the global economy" and to submit an addendum to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Follow-up to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond"[4] to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session,

Recognizing that the implementation of the World Programme of Action and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,[5] require the full and effective participation of young people and youth-led organizations and other civil society organizations at the local, national, regional and international level,

Recognizing also the positive impact that youth participation in the global economy and in social and economic development can have on the eradication of poverty and hunger,

Recognizing further Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/32 of 27 July 2007, entitled "Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)" and the decisions of the Programme Coordinating Board of UNAIDS at its twentieth meeting, in particular the reference to the need to scale up HIV prevention among injecting drug users, consistent with relevant international drug control treaties,

1. *Reaffirms* the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond;[1]

2. *Decides* to adopt the Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth, annexed to the present resolution;

3. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Secretary-General entitled "Follow-up to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond"[4] and its addendum entitled "Goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy";[6]

4. *Emphasizes* the importance of a fair globalization, and recalls the resolve, expressed at the 2005 World Summit, to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of relevant national and international policies as well as national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies, as part of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;

5. *Reiterates* that the eradication of poverty, hunger and malnutrition, particularly as they affect children and youth, is crucial for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, recalls the commitment to eradicate poverty and promote sustained economic growth, sustainable development and global prosperity

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[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2007, Supplement No. 6* (E/2007/26), chap. I.E.

[4] A/62/61-E/2007/7.

[5] See resolution 55/2.

[6] A/62/61/Add.1-E/2007/7/Add.1.

for all, and the need for urgent action on all sides, including more ambitious national development strategies and efforts backed by increased international support, and calls for the increased participation of youth and youth-led organizations in the development of such national development strategies;

6. *Reiterates also* the critical role of both formal and non-formal education in the achievement of poverty eradication and other development goals, as envisaged in the Millennium Declaration, in particular basic education and training for eradicating illiteracy, and stresses the commitments to strive for expanded secondary and higher education, especially for girls and young women, and for the creation of human resources and infrastructure capabilities and the empowerment of those living in poverty;

7. *Reiterates further* the need to intensify efforts to implement effectively the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade[7] and to integrate substantially those efforts in the Education for All process and other activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as other literacy initiatives within the framework of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

8. *Recognizes* that while youth today are better placed than ever before to participate in, and benefit from, global development, many young people remain marginalized, disconnected or excluded from the opportunities that globalization offers, and, in this regard, calls upon Member States, with the support of the international community, as appropriate, to:

(a) Integrate and protect youth in the global economy, including those who live in poverty, through the provision of policies that give them everywhere a real opportunity to find full and productive employment and decent work, including policies that promote the transition to work on the basis of equality and non-discrimination;

(b) Ensure that youth development, especially their access to food, water, health, shelter, education and employment, is specifically addressed in national policies and programmes, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, and in other policy documents that aim to foster the participation of countries in the global economy;

(c) Ensure adequate funding for formal and non-formal education, including programmes geared at fostering the acquisition of requisite skills by youth;

(d) Improve the ability of young people, including those who live in poverty, to make a better transition into the world of work and enhance their access to the changing labour market through promoting policies that expand opportunities for youth to get quality education and training; the provision of skills development combined with other programmes that are targeted at the specific labour market needs of youth and that focus on the multiple needs of those most at risk of joblessness; and the incorporation of skills training into education planning at all stages;

(e) Reinforce links between policies on education, training, social integration and mobility so as to improve the situation of young people in the labour

[7] See resolution 57/166.

market and to reduce significantly youth unemployment while also supporting policies that promote reconciliation of family life and working life, equal opportunities, solidarity between the generations, health and lifelong learning;

(f) Encourage young people's entrepreneurship, including by promoting formal and non-formal education on entrepreneurship for young people, increasing their access to microfinancing and facilitating their participation in cooperatives and other forms of social, economic or financial enterprises;

(g) Develop national strategies to overcome the "digital divide" in each country and ensure that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use information and communications technology appropriately, including the capacity to analyse and treat information in creative and innovative ways and to share their expertise, thus enabling them to overcome the barriers of distance and socio-economic disadvantage, while also promoting youth involvement in creating, repairing, managing and maintaining information and communications technology and providing them access to information on a range of issues that directly affect them, including health, education and employment;

(h) Ensure young women's equal access to education and vocational training at all levels in order to provide them with an equal opportunity to participate in the global economy;

(i) Recognize the rights of young persons with disabilities to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, including through ensuring an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning, and to work, on an equal basis with others;

(j) Consider expanding avenues for regular labour migration, taking into account labour market needs and demographic trends, recognizing the important nexus between migration and development and bearing in mind that young people account for a large number of those migrating;

(k) Take all necessary measures to ensure the rights of young people to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and their access to sustainable health systems and social services, without discrimination, paying special attention to and raising awareness of nutrition, including eating disorders and obesity, and the effects of communicable diseases, and to sexual and reproductive health, including measures to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS;

(l) Ensure that national policies and programmes on youth development address the particular needs of young people who are in distressed circumstances or otherwise socially excluded or marginalized, including indigenous, migrant, refugee and displaced youth, young persons living in situations of armed conflict, terrorism, hostage-taking, aggression, foreign occupation, civil war or post-conflict settings, young people subjected to racism or xenophobia, street children, poor youth in urban or rural areas and youth affected by natural or man-made disasters;

9. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to support the efforts of Governments, together with civil society, including youth-led organizations, the private sector and other parts of society, to anticipate and offset the negative social and economic consequences of globalization and to maximize its benefits for young people;

10. *Urges* Member States to combat all forms of discrimination against young people, including that based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and to promote equal opportunities for all;

11. *Underlines* the strategic importance of initiatives such as the "Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-Led Development Initiative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme",[8] which will provide resources to mobilize young people to strengthen youth-related policy formulation and to pilot and demonstrate new and innovative approaches to employment, good governance, water and sanitation, adequate shelter and secure tenure, and invites Member States to contribute to the Fund;

12. *Urges* Member States to involve young people and youth-led organizations in the development of national policies that affect them, where appropriate, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, bearing in mind that girls, boys, young women and young men have the same rights;

13. *Calls upon* Member States to consider using the proposed goals and targets, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy",[6] at the national level as a means of facilitating the monitoring of progress of youth in the global economy and the implementation of the World Programme of Action;

14. *Also calls upon* Member States to ensure the full participation of young people and youth-led organizations in the development of policies designed to meet national youth goals and targets, taking into account the proposed goals and targets contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy", and to collaborate with the United Nations system, young people, youth-led organizations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in all efforts to achieve such goals and targets;

15. *Encourages* Member States to collect, on a continuous basis, youth-specific data disaggregated by age and sex, whenever possible, in order to create comprehensive databases within youth ministries or similar offices to assist in measuring progress in implementing the priority areas of the World Programme of Action, and requests the Secretary-General to devise means to widely disseminate such data so as to ensure that the global interest in youth development is informed by sound and adequate data;

16. *Takes note* of the process of collaboration and consultation between Member States, the organizations, programmes, regional commissions and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in identifying the proposed goals and targets for measuring youth and the global economy, and recommends continued collaboration, including in the form of high-level training cooperation, between these actors in the implementation of the World Programme of Action and the monitoring of the progress of such implementation;

17. *Stresses* that progress in achieving the internationally-agreed target of full and productive employment and decent work for young people should be a central objective of national and international efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and requests the United Nations agencies, and invites the

[8] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 8* (A/62/8), annex I.B, resolution 21/6.

international community and civil society as well as the private sector, to promote the broader youth development agenda and to strengthen international cooperation in order to support Member States in their efforts to achieve such progress, taking into account that the primary responsibility for ensuring youth development lies with States;

18. *Stresses also* the importance of ensuring that young people are recognized as active agents in decision-making processes and for positive change and development in society, urges Member States, in this regard, to consider including youth representatives in their delegations to all relevant discussions in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, bearing in mind the principles of gender balance and non-discrimination, and emphasizes that such youth representatives should be selected through a transparent process which ensures that they have a suitable mandate to represent young people in their countries;

19. *Recognizes* the positive contribution that youth representatives make to the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies and their role as an important channel of communication between young people and the United Nations, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to adequately support the United Nations Programme on Youth of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat so that it can continue to facilitate their effective participation in meetings;

20. *Recognizes also* the need for a greater geographical balance of youth representation, and encourages Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the United Nations Youth Fund in order to facilitate the participation of youth representatives from developing countries;

21. *Recognizes further* that national youth councils or their equivalent bodies are effective channels of cooperation and information exchange between young people, their national Governments and other decision makers and that strong youth councils can provide opportunities for more young people to become active in decision-making and in shaping their societies, in this regard welcomes the political and financial support provided by Member States to their creation and sustained development, and invites all States to continue and to increase such support, where appropriate;

22. *Requests* the Commission for Social Development, at its forty-sixth session, to include youth employment in the discussions on its priority theme "Promoting full employment and decent work for all", taking into account, inter alia, the recommendations on youth employment contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Follow-up to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond", and invites young people and youth-led organizations to contribute to those discussions;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, through the Commission for Social Development at its forty-seventh session, on the implementation of the World Programme of Action in the clusters "youth in civil society" and "youth and their well-being" and to include in that report a comprehensive set of goals and targets for these clusters based on consultations with Member States as well as the organizations, programmes, regional commissions and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, young people, youth-led organizations and other non-governmental organizations.

Annex

Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth

I. Globalization

1. Globalization has opened new opportunities for sustained economic growth and the development of the world economy. Globalization has also permitted countries to share experiences and to learn from one another's achievements and difficulties and has promoted a cross-fertilization of ideas, cultural values and aspirations. Globalization has thus helped to connect youth not only to the rest of the world, but also with each other.

2. At the same time, the rapid processes of change and adjustment of globalization have been accompanied by intensified poverty, unemployment and social disintegration. Threats to human well-being, such as environmental risks, have also been globalized. Some countries have successfully adapted to the changes and benefited from globalization, but many others, especially least developed countries, have remained marginalized in the globalized world economy. The benefits are very unevenly shared, while the costs are unevenly distributed. Globalization should be fully inclusive and equitable. There is a strong need for appropriate policies and measures at the national and international levels to help countries respond effectively to the challenges of globalization and the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

3. Many young people, especially in developing countries, remain marginalized from the global economy and lack the capabilities to access the opportunities that globalization offers. Many are restricted by inadequate education, limited skills, unemployment and poverty or are outside the reach of basic information and communication and the goods and services that have become available with globalization.

Proposals for action

Managing the effects of globalization on youth

4. The international community should continue to support the efforts of Governments, together with civil society, including youth-led organizations, the private sector and other parts of society, to anticipate and offset the negative social and economic consequences of globalization and to maximize its benefits for young people.

5. Governments should ensure that access of youth to technical, secondary and higher education is improved and that curricula are adapted to meet the needs of a rapidly changing labour market associated with globalization. The transition from learning to work should also be facilitated.

6. Governments should foster the conditions that provide opportunities, jobs and social services for youth in their home countries. Efforts should be made to guarantee that young migrants enjoy full respect for their human rights, including fair and equal treatment with others and the protection of law against, inter alia, violence, exploitation and discrimination such as racism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia

and cultural intolerance, and access to economic opportunities and social services, as appropriate.

Promoting youth employment and skills development in the context of globalization

7. In order to overcome the mismatch between the skills that youth possess and the specialized demands of labour markets shaped by globalization, Governments, with appropriate support from the international community, should provide funding and opportunities in both formal and non-formal education for youth to acquire requisite skills, including through skills development programmes.

8. At the same time, Governments should promote access to work through integrated policies that enable the creation of new and quality jobs for young people and that facilitate access to those jobs.

Establishing ways of monitoring systems to track the effects of globalization on youth

9. Governments should assess the extent to which the benefits of globalization are accessible to youth and should design and implement programmes to enable youth to better harness the benefits of globalization.

II. Information and communications technology

10. Information and communications technology (ICT) and infrastructures are growing in importance as a part of everyday business and interaction. This process can be enhanced by removing barriers to universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to information, which hinder the bridging of the digital divide, particularly those that impede the full achievement of the economic, social and cultural development of countries and the welfare of their people, especially youth, in particular in developing countries. ICT has enormous potential to expand access to quality education, to boost literacy and universal primary education and to facilitate the learning process itself, thus laying the groundwork for the establishment of a fully inclusive and development-oriented information society and knowledge economy that respects cultural and linguistic diversity.

11. Youth have a particular interest and ability with regard to modern technology. ICT can empower youth by providing them with the opportunity to overcome the barriers of distance and socio-economic disadvantage. Through the Internet, for example, young people can have access to information on a range of issues that directly affect them, including health, education and employment. This information can be used to improve the quality of life of youth and their communities. This process can be facilitated if Governments, civil society, the private sector, families, youth-led organizations and other groups work together to open up avenues for a cultural and social exchange among young people. Governments can also capitalize on the interest of the young in ICT to alleviate poverty. For example, youth can become engaged not only in the use of ICT, but also in the development and engineering of locally relevant software design and hardware.

12. ICT offers new ways to address the needs of youth with disabilities who cannot access traditional sources of information and employment. Vulnerable groups of the population can capitalize on ICT to make a better connection with society and advance their education and employment opportunities.

Proposals for action

Making information and communications technology available to all youth

13. Governments, supported by the international community, as appropriate, should facilitate access to ICT for all youth, including those in difficult-to-reach areas, such as rural areas, and in indigenous communities. Governments should evaluate inequalities in access that exist between urban and rural youth and between young women and men and should develop national strategies to overcome the "digital divide" in each country, thus decreasing the proportion of youth who have no access to ICT.

14. Governments should develop domestic policies to ensure that ICT is fully and appropriately integrated into education and training at all levels, including in the development of curricula, teacher training and institutional administration and management, as well as in support of the concept of lifelong learning.

15. Governments, with the support of the international community, should promote and encourage local knowledge systems, and locally produced content in media and communications, support the development of a wide range of ICT-based programmes in local languages, as appropriate, with content relevant to different groups of young persons, especially young women, and build the capacity of girls and women to develop ICT.

Providing training to facilitate use of information and communications technology

16. Governments, in collaboration with relevant actors in the information society, should ensure that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use ICT appropriately, including the capacity to analyse and treat information in creative and innovative ways, to share their expertise and to participate fully in the information society. Efforts should be made to provide special training courses for in-school and out-of-school youth to enable them to become conversant with ICT and to facilitate their use of such technologies.

Protecting youth from the harmful aspects of information and communications technology

17. Governments should strengthen action to protect youth from abuse and to defend their rights in the context of the use of ICT. In that context, the best interests of youth are a primary consideration. Governments should promote responsible behaviour and raise awareness of possible risks for young people arising from the harmful aspects of ICT in order that they may protect themselves from possible exploitation and injury.

18. Governments, in cooperation with relevant actors of information society, should strengthen action to protect children and youth from abuse and the harmful impact of ICT, in particular through cybercrimes, including child pornography.

Promoting the use of information and communications technology by persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups

19. Governments should facilitate the development of ICT capacity for youth, including indigenous youth, youth with disabilities and youth in remote and rural communities.

20. Governments should initiate the development and use of special technical and legal arrangements to make ICT accessible to all youth, including indigenous youth, youth with disabilities and youth in remote and rural communities.

Empowering young people as key contributors to building an inclusive information society

21. Governments should actively engage youth in innovative ICT-based development programmes and should widen opportunities for youth involvement in e-strategy processes in a manner that encourages youth to assume leadership roles. The role of youth in creating, repairing, managing and maintaining ICT should also be recognized and encouraged.

22. Bearing in mind that literacy and numeracy are preconditions for access to and effective use of ICT, Governments should promote opportunities through formal and non-formal channels for young persons to acquire the appropriate knowledge.

23. ICT should also be used to enhance education, employment and youth participation in the decision-making process. ICT should be used to improve the quality of education and to better prepare youth for the demands of the information society.

III. HIV/AIDS

24. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is increasingly a problem of youth, especially in parts of the developing world. Governments have noted with grave concern the fact that new HIV infections are heavily concentrated among youth and that there is a lack of information available to help youth understand their sexuality, including their sexual and reproductive health, in order to increase their ability to protect themselves from HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases and to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

25. Young people, especially young women in Africa, face especially high risks of HIV infection. Young people and women are particularly vulnerable to infection owing to their lack of economic and social power and their lack of the capability to decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality in order to increase their ability to protect themselves from HIV infections. They often lack the tools and information required to avoid infection and cope with AIDS. In 2006, women and girls made up 57 per cent of all people infected with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa, where a striking 76 per cent of young people (aged 15-24) living with HIV are female.

26. Although many children orphaned by AIDS have not yet entered the youth age groups, they are at great risk of becoming youth with severe vulnerabilities. They are subject to malnutrition, illness, abuse, child labour and

sexual exploitation, and these factors increase their vulnerability to HIV infection. They also suffer the stigma and discrimination often associated with HIV/AIDS and may be denied education, work, housing and other basic needs as a result.

27. It is imperative that young people continue to have access to evidence- and skills-based youth-specific HIV education to enable them to avoid high-risk behaviour. In some regions youth, especially girls, play a key role in caring for HIV/AIDS patients or their orphans. To ensure that young caregivers stay in school, build their skills and have the chance to generate an income, Governments should provide economic and social support to families that rely on young caregivers as well as support for improving home- and community-based care.

28. Because youth often lack decision-making power and financial resources, they may be the last to receive treatment if they become infected. Programmes should scale up the provision of treatment as part of the promotion of the highest attainable standards of health.

29. It is essential for Governments to implement fully the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session in 2001,[1] and to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goal to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. In addition, Governments should implement the commitments dealing with HIV/AIDS reached at all major United Nations conferences and summits, including the 2005 World Summit and the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS held on 2 June 2006,[2] at which Member States committed themselves to scaling up responses directed towards achieving the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010 and towards achieving the goal of universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development.

Proposals for action

Raising awareness about HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment for youth

30. Governments should ensure that prevention of HIV infection is the mainstay of national, regional and international responses to the pandemic and should therefore commit themselves to intensifying efforts to ensure that a wide range of prevention programmes, which take into account local circumstances, ethics and cultural values, are available in all countries, in particular the most affected countries, including: information, education and communications, in languages most understood within communities and with respect for their cultures, aimed at reducing risk-taking behaviours and encouraging responsible sexual behaviour, including abstinence and fidelity; expanded access to essential commodities, including male and female condoms and sterile injecting equipment; harm-reduction efforts related to drug use; expanded access to voluntary and confidential counselling and testing; safe blood supplies; and early and effective treatment of sexually transmitted infections.

[1] Resolution S-26/2, annex.

[2] See resolution 60/262, annex.

31. Governments should commit themselves to addressing the rising rates of HIV infection among young people in order to ensure that future generations may be free of HIV infection through the implementation of comprehensive evidence-based prevention strategies, responsible sexual behaviour, including the use of condoms, evidence- and skills-based youth-specific HIV education, mass media interventions and the provision of youth-friendly health services.

32. Governments should provide access to the highest attainable standards of affordable and youth-friendly health care in order to increase the capacities of young people to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[3] that integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care and include confidential voluntary counselling and testing and involve young people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of those efforts.

33. Governments should promote initiatives aimed at reducing the prices of antiretroviral drugs, especially second-line drugs, available to young people, including initiatives undertaken on a voluntary basis by groups of Member States based on innovative financing mechanisms that contribute to the mobilization of resources for social development, including those that aim to provide further drug access at affordable prices to developing countries on a sustainable and predictable basis.

34. In recognition of the fact that HIV/AIDS is increasingly affecting youth in both developed and developing countries, all efforts should be made, in full partnership with young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers, to ensure that youth have access to accurate information, education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education, and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection.

35. Governments should involve young people, including youth living with HIV/AIDS, inter alia, through their respective youth organizations and, as appropriate, with the support of their families, in the decision-making, planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes.

36. Governments should ensure that prevention programmes include counselling for those who are infected with HIV in order to ensure that they take appropriate precautions to prevent the spread of the virus and to help them cope with the effects of living with HIV/AIDS.

Supporting universal HIV/AIDS education, taking gender inequalities into account

37. Trafficking of women and girls for prostitution and sexual slavery increases the vulnerability of young women to HIV/AIDS infection and is linked to the widespread feminization of poverty, sex tourism, sweatshops and other detrimental consequences of globalization. Governments should devise, enforce and strengthen effective youth-sensitive measures to combat, eliminate and prosecute all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic

[3] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy within wider efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

38. Governments should include appropriate information in school curricula and non-formal training programmes on the effects of high-risk behaviour, including intravenous drug use, on the transmission of HIV infection.

39. Governments should give special attention, in all programmes aimed at providing information about and preventing HIV/AIDS among youth, to aspects of gender and to the disproportionate vulnerability of girls and young women.

Legislation and legal instruments to protect vulnerable youth

40. Governments should ensure non-discrimination and full and equal enjoyment of all human rights through the promotion of an active and visible policy of destigmatization of children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

41. Governments should strengthen legal, policy, administrative and other measures for the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights by youth, the protection of their dignity and the reduction of their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS through the elimination of all forms of discrimination and all types of sexual exploitation of young girls and boys, including for commercial reasons, as well as all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional and customary practices, abuse, rape and other forms of sexual violence, battering and trafficking in women and girls.

42. Governments should intensify efforts to enact, strengthen or enforce, as appropriate, legislation, regulations and other measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination and to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by youth living with HIV, including policies to secure their access to education, inheritance, employment, health care, social and health services, prevention, support and treatment, information and legal protection, while respecting their privacy and confidentiality and developing strategies to combat the stigma and social exclusion connected with the epidemic.

IV. Armed conflict

43. Development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The scale of the violence perpetrated against civilians, including youth, in the past couple of decades is extremely worrisome. Armed conflicts have resulted in killings, the massive displacement of people, including youth, and the destruction of communities, which has impacted negatively on their development.

44. Youth are often among the main victims of armed conflict. Children and youth are killed or maimed, made orphans, abducted, taken hostage, forcibly displaced, deprived of education and health care and left with deep emotional scars and trauma. Children illegally recruited as child soldiers are often forced to commit serious abuses. Armed conflict destroys the safe environment provided by a house, a family, adequate nutrition, education and employment. During conflict, health risks increase among youth, especially young women. Young women and girls face additional risks, in particular those of sexual violence and exploitation.

45. During conflict, young men and women who are forced to take on "adult" roles miss out on opportunities for personal or professional development. When conflict ends, many of the young people who must make the transition to adulthood while dealing with the traumas of war are at the same time required to adapt quickly to their new roles, often as parents and caretakers of the victims of war. Without services to help them deal with their situation, youth and young adults may fail to integrate into society.

Proposals for action

Protecting youth under age 18 from direct involvement in armed conflict

46. Governments should ensure that children benefit from an early age from education about values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life in order to enable them to resolve any dispute peacefully and in a spirit of respect for human dignity, with tolerance and non-discrimination. Governments should promote a culture of peace, tolerance and dialogue, including in both formal and non-formal education.

47. Governments should consider, as a matter of priority, the ratification and effective implementation of the Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour 1999 (Convention No. 182) of the International Labour Organization.

48. Governments should take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take direct part in hostilities and that those who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.

49. Governments should take all necessary measures, in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law, as a matter of priority, to prevent the recruitment and use of children by armed groups, as distinct from the armed forces of a State, including the adoption of policies that do not tolerate the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, and the legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize such practices.

50. Governments should protect young persons in situations of armed conflict, post-conflict settings and settings involving refugees and internally displaced persons, where youth are at risk of violence and where their ability to seek and receive redress is often restricted, bearing in mind that peace is inextricably linked with equality between young women and young men and development, that armed and other types of conflicts and terrorism and hostage-taking still persist in many parts of the world, and that aggression, foreign occupation and ethnic and other types of conflicts are an ongoing reality affecting young persons in nearly every region from which they need to be protected.

Providing for the reintegration of youth ex-combatants and protection of non-combatants

51. Governments should provide opportunities for all youth who have been engaged in active combat, whether voluntarily or by force, to demobilize and contribute to society's development if they seek to do so. In this regard, Governments should establish programmes to provide opportunities for youth

ex-combatants to retool and retrain so as to facilitate their employment in economic activity and their reintegration into society, including family reunification.

52. Governments should take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children and young victims of armed conflicts, in particular by restoring access of those children and youth to health care and education, including through "Education for All" programmes, as well as to put in place effective youth employment strategies to help provide a decent living for young people and to facilitate their reintegration into society.

Promoting active involvement of youth in maintaining peace and security

53. Governments should encourage the involvement of young people, where appropriate, in activities concerning the protection of children and youth affected by armed conflict, including programmes for reconciliation, peace consolidation and peacebuilding.

V. Intergenerational issues

54. Many aspects of the demographic transition, global economic development and globalization have influenced opportunities for the intergenerational exchange of knowledge, ideas and resources. The increase in lifespan implies that many adults may be able to share knowledge and resources with younger generations over a longer period of time. In recent times, greater longevity has resulted in situations where many older people live for longer periods in some form of dependency on younger generations. On the other hand, trends in globalization and development have resulted in situations where many young people are cut off from their families. In many developing countries and countries with economies in transition, it is the ageing population that is dominant in rural areas owing to the exodus of young adults. Older persons may be left behind without the traditional support of families and even without adequate financial resources. While older persons lose opportunities to receive support from younger members of families, younger persons also lose opportunities to benefit from the knowledge and guidance of older members of their families.

55. At the family and community levels, intergenerational ties can be valuable for everyone. Individual and family choices, geographical mobility and the pressures of contemporary life can keep people apart, yet the great majority of people in all cultures maintain close relations with their families throughout their lives. These relationships work in both directions, with older persons often providing significant contributions financially, emotionally and in respect of the education and care of grandchildren and other kin, thereby making a crucial contribution to the stability of the family unit.

56. The weakening of intergenerational connections in the context of ageing societies implies that various needs of youth, children and older persons, which may have been supported through intricate and complex familial relationships, are increasingly not being met and are instead becoming the responsibility of the State or the private sector.

57. It is therefore incumbent on Governments and relevant sectors of society to develop programmes that renew or restore intergenerational solidarity. Where there has already been substantial erosion of the ability of communities to meet this

objective, Governments should intervene to ensure that basic needs for protection are met.

Proposals for action

Strengthening families

58. While respecting individual preferences for living arrangements, all sectors of society, including Governments, should develop programmes to strengthen families and to foster intergenerational relations.

Empowering young women

59. Governments should promote greater participation by young women in the labour force, including those living in rural and remote areas, by providing and developing the necessary skills to enable them to find employment, especially through taking measures to eliminate male and female stereotypes and through promoting role models, and to facilitate better reconciliation of work and family life.

Strengthening intergenerational solidarity

60. Government and private sector businesses should capitalize on the opportunity to use the experience and skills of older workers to train younger and newer employees.

61. Governments should promote equality and solidarity between generations, including by offering young people full and effective participation in poverty eradication, employment creation and social integration programmes within their societies.

62. All sectors of society should be encouraged to develop reciprocity in learning, which provides older persons with opportunities to learn from younger generations.

63. Where traditional forms of social support have been reduced by migration, globalization and related situations, Governments should work with non-governmental organizations and the private sector to provide assistance and support to older caregivers, especially those providing care for HIV/AIDS orphans, in meeting the needs of their children and grandchildren.

64. Governments should take steps to strengthen solidarity among generations and intergenerational partnerships through the promotion of activities that support intergenerational communication and understanding, and should encourage mutually responsive relationships between generations.

65. The full and effective participation of young people and youth organizations at the local, national, regional and international levels is important for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, the promotion and implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth, and the evaluation of the progress achieved and the obstacles encountered in its implementation, and for support of the activities of mechanisms that have been set up by young people and youth organizations. Governments should encourage their participation in actions and decisions and in strengthening efforts to implement the World Programme of Action, bearing in mind that girls, boys, young women and young men have the same rights, but different needs and strengths, and that they are active agents in decision-making processes and for positive change and development in society.